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ONTARIO'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS:

A Perspective

1982–1983



Ontario

Ministry of
Intergovernmental
Affairs

September 1983



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September 1983

I am happy to introduce a review of Ontario's international relations in 1982-83. The aim of this first edition is to collect in one place the wide scope of international programs, activities and issues in which the Province of Ontario is now involved. With the increased interest of other countries in the activities of provincial governments in Canada, and the increased international activity of provincial ministries and agencies, Ontario's international relations have become an important element of Canada's dealings with other countries.

My ministry's International Relations Branch exists as a centre of information and advice to all parts of the government on this province's dealings with other countries.

The Honourable Thomas L. Wells,
Minister



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Toronto, Ontario

September 1983

I hope that this review of Ontario's international relations for 1982-83 will serve to make all ministries aware of the vast increase in the scope of Ontario's international activities in the past few years.

We would welcome from any readers of this review, comments and suggestions as to how it could be improved in future years, or how the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs could be more useful to other ministries and agencies in the planning and co-ordination of their relationships with other countries.

With the recent proliferation of international activities on the part of many different agencies within the provinces of Canada, there is an obvious need to ensure that resources are used as effectively as possible in the interests of Canada and Ontario.

I hope that readers will not hesitate to call the International Relations Branch for any further information or advice.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. W. Stevenson", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

D. W. Stevenson,
Deputy Minister

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INTRODUCTION

The government of Ontario has been active on the international scene for a number of years -- in part because of its proximity to the United States, which has exerted such a dominant influence on its economy and culture; in part also, as a result of the province's historical and cultural ties with the United Kingdom and France.

More recently, immigration has been a key factor in changing the composition of the province's population, which has become noticeably more diverse, cosmopolitan and international in thought and attitude over the past 30 years.

The technological advances achieved since 1945 have had a similar effect. With improvements in transportation and communications, the globe has become smaller.

International economic forces have not only become more complex but also produce a more immediate impact, so that the economic well-being of all nations is now dependent on forces, policies and techniques outside the control of any one nation.

The province is not isolated from these events.

Along with other countries and other provinces, Ontario is obliged to follow international events closely, since every modification to the international economic order --

to the monetary system, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, financial assistance to indebted nations or economic development of the lesser developed countries -- will have some impact on its economic well-being.

With its excellent geographic position, and wealth of resources, Ontario has every opportunity for increasing its investment and development opportunities and meeting its commitment to double its trade over the next five years. With the economic upturn now underway in the United States and throughout the developed world, there will be a continued need for Ontario's manufactured goods, services, technologies and expertise throughout the underdeveloped world -- particularly in the Pacific and the Middle East.

As already stated, economic conditions in the rest of the world are significant because of their direct and immediate impact on Ontario. These conditions usually reflect political, social and cultural realities with which the province must also be concerned because of their potential for causing a change in domestic conditions.

Ontario keeps abreast of international developments in many ways. It operates within a federal-provincial framework, outlined by Canada's constitution; it supports federal diplomatic representation, using Canada's offices abroad when and where appropriate;

it also supplements these missions with its own more concentrated and localized representation when needed.

No longer is the Department of External Affairs the sole interpreter of Canada's international interests. Provinces contribute more and more to the foreign policy-making process through federal-provincial committees, delegations abroad, foreign missions, ministerial travel, and general international ventures. Ontario now undertakes a variety of international activities on a continuous basis and enjoys an increasingly important international presence.

ONTARIO'S INTERNATIONAL INTERESTS

Whether Ontario is engaged in trade promotion, international assistance, developing a provincial profile, or entering into a memorandum of intent with another jurisdiction, its activities abroad all have economic implications. Clearly, however, some international activities are more motivated by economic interest than others.

Economic Development

The promotion of trade, the attraction of foreign investment, and the need for a renewal of Ontario's basic industries are all part of the same domestic requirement: creating useful employment in an economy which is modern and provides for steady growth. Ontario needs more investment, a growing manufacturing system based on modern technology, and larger markets for its manufactured goods. All of these objectives are being actively pursued by the provincial government.

In recent years, Ontario's international competitive advantage has shifted from the manufacturing to the service sector; for example, to banking, engineering, education, communications planning or public administration. Since many of these areas fall wholly or partly within the province's public sector, the key issue for the Ontario government is to develop the government-to-government contacts needed to take full commercial

advantage of any opportunities that arise.

In pursuing its goal of economic development, Ontario not only operates within a federal-provincial framework but also adheres to certain international practices or rules. In the federal-provincial context, the federal Department of External Affairs plays the largest part in representing Canada's interests abroad, overseeing Canadian policies that affect foreign relations and trade ensuring that the interests of the provinces are balanced with those of the federal government and the private sector.

Resolving International Issues

The economic recession which has affected the developed nations and the unsatisfactory condition of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) -- to which there is often a greater commitment in word than in deed -- has left the international trading community with some serious problems. For Ontario, the major problem remains the prospect of growing world protectionism and a movement by its trading partners away from the more open trading system envisaged in the Tokyo Round negotiations of 1979.

Protectionist legislation in the United States, aimed primarily at Europe or Japan, has all too often affected Ontario's economic well-being. The province's economic needs, coupled with the current international trading picture, have presented some problems, as the following examples illustrate.

Issue:

Japanese industry continues to make inroads into the North American automotive industry.

Fact:

The automotive industry is Ontario's largest direct employer, as well as a major market for other industries in the province, and an important source of provincial revenue.

Ontario's Position:

The problems currently facing the North American auto industry are productivity and competitiveness.

Structural difficulties affecting the industry are global in nature.

The provincial government has pursued a policy of assisting the industry, where possible, in making the necessary adjustments by providing relocation and industrial assistance and establishing automotive parts technology centres.

The Ontario government has also sought improved bilateral relations with major auto-producing countries -- the U.S., Japan and the European Community -- and is placing a high priority on the pursuit of joint ventures and investment in Canada by overseas auto manufacturers. However, the province continues to support restrictions on the number of cars imported into Ontario, as well as to require that vehicle manufacturers meet conditions similar to those imposed under the auto pact, in order to allow Ontario's industry time to adjust.

Issue:

The Foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA) continues to be criticized by potential investor countries.

Fact:

Ontario's major production facilities are frequently specialized operations in a chain of production controlled from outside the province.

Ontario's Position:

In the past, Ontario has voiced concern over the time required to review and process FIRA applications, and has expressed the need to clarify and publicize the agency's procedures and criteria.

Recently, however, the agency's role has been clarified, and the time delays and backlog in cases to be reviewed have been reduced considerably. However, the image of FIRA abroad is still of some concern, and the province recognizes the need to promote the benefits of foreign investment. Federal and provincial industrial policies should emphasize a stable environment conducive to investment, be it domestic or foreign.

Issue:

Purchasing policies in the United States exclude Canadian imports.

Fact:

Urban transit equipment purchased under the U.S. Surface Transportation Assistance Act must be assembled in the U.S. in order to qualify for federal subsidies. Amendments to the Act in 1982 established a procurement preference of 25 per cent for domestic concrete and steel used in interstate highway rebuilding and repair projects (an increase of 10 per cent from previous legislation).

Ontario's Position:

The Ontario cement industry, with the aid of federal and provincial officials, is seeking clarification on how the law will apply to intermediate cement products. The industry has petitioned the U.S. secretary of transportation for a regional exemption in upstate New York and Michigan.

Other Ontario industries such as transit equipment manufacturers are significantly affected by the Act and are seeking ways to circumvent the legislation. One possible method is the establishment of assembly facilities in the United States.

Resolving Issues with the United States

The maintenance of good relations with its southern neighbour is essential for Ontario. A number of Ontario government ministries and agencies are involved on a day-to-day basis with the United States on transborder issues. For example, the Ministry of Transportation and Communications is the lead ministry in dealing with states and special purpose authorities on questions relating to maintenance, taxation and standards for the 16 bridges and tunnels that link Ontario with the U.S.

Ontario Hydro also has an ongoing relationship with the American utilities in the administration of the interconnections that have been established with the United States.

The Ministry of Natural Resources, as well, co-operates closely with the neighbouring states in the provision of forest fire fighting services.

In the recent past, a number of "transborder" issues have arisen which have required rapid resolution. In some cases, these issues were an outgrowth of American government policy, but such is not always the case.

The dynamics of American national politics are extremely important for all countries associated with the United States. This is particularly true for Canada and for Ontario. The guiding philosophy of the U.S. administration is central to this relationship, and the dominant attitudes

American national politics are now determined by two overriding factors:

- The U.S. administration is led by a president determined to reverse the centralization of government and government spending, which began some 50 years ago.
- Congressional Democrats, who are in the majority in the House of Representatives, have been forced by economic conditions into a protectionist position.

For Ontario, this has resulted in a less sympathetic or helpful government in Washington and an apparent increase in misunderstanding between Canada and the United States.

Issue:

Ensuring the implementation of the 1978 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement

Fact:

Between 1980 and 1983 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's budget for water quality was cut in half, in an effort by the Reagan administration to turn responsibility for the environment over to individual states.

The Great Lakes states, which are experiencing serious budgetary problems, are unable to maintain surveillance, monitoring and research programs at pre-1980 levels.

Ontario's Position:

Regardless of the federal division of powers in the United States, Ontario holds the U.S. administration responsible for implementation of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The province will continue to press the federal government to hold the U.S. to its 1979 commitments.

Issue:

Forcing a clean-up and the eventual elimination of hazardous waste sites on the American side of the Niagara River

Fact:

The leaching of toxic chemicals into the Niagara River has caused concern in communities that obtain their drinking water from the river or from Lake Ontario.

Clean-up procedures are being established through confidential negotiations between the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency (E.P.A.) and the companies responsible for the pollution problem. Both parties wish to avoid having their dispute settled in open court. Ontario is concerned by the parties' failure to reach a rapid agreement and by the possibility that any agreement reached will not fully resolve its environmental concerns.

Ontario's Position:

Ontario is discussing with the U.S. and Canadian governments procedures by which the province's concerns can be taken into account in the E.P.A.-Hooker Chemical negotiations on the Niagara "S-area" site. Failing this, Ontario will apply to the U.S. courts to intervene directly in the negotiations.

Issue:

Persuading the American government to reduce emissions of pollutants that cause acid rain -- especially sulphur dioxide.

Fact:

Canada-U.S. negotiations on acid rain have made little progress under the Reagan administration.

While professing concern over acid rain, the Reagan administration believes the solution is to conduct more research. Meanwhile, regulations on sulphur dioxide emissions are being weakened.

Acid rain is the most controversial element in the American Congress's efforts to review and amend the U.S. Clean Air Act.

Ontario's Position:

The appointment of William Ruckelshaus as administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency has been a positive step. He has already suggested that the agency will be playing a stronger role in the enforcement of environmental standards, but the most likely solution of the acid rain issue may come through legislation passed by the U.S. Congress. Ontario is therefore working to educate American interest groups, who are potential allies, about the nature of the problem.

Issue:

How to increase the sale of excess electricity from Ontario Hydro to neighbouring states.

Fact:

The northeastern U.S. could run short of electricity within a decade due to its shift away from the use of oil, and public opposition to nuclear plants.

Impediments to increased exports of electricity from Ontario to the U.S. are the lack of transmission facilities as well as price competition from Quebec, Newfoundland and the U.S. Midwest.

The main impediment to dedicated nuclear plants is uncertainty about how the U.S. will respond: the United States might act to protect its own electrical power industry.

The key to surmounting these obstacles is to overcome the fragmentation of the U.S. regulatory system. As it stands now, the U.S. federal government and individual states have the power to block sales, making planning difficult.

Ontario's Position:

Ontario is working with the Canadian government to determine U.S. federal government attitudes and is waiting to see if state efforts to reorganize regulatory agencies on a regional basis are successful. In the meantime, Ontario Hydro is pursuing export opportunities

Issue:

The different regulatory practices of the U.S., on the one hand, and Canada, on the other, have caused reactions and reprisals from U.S. industry.

Fact:

The U.S. government has deregulated airlines, as well as interstate busing and trucking companies, whereas in Canada, where airline transportation is federally regulated and highway transportation is a provincial responsibility, little deregulation has taken place.

American airline companies are seeking greater access to Canadian airports but have been unsuccessful because of Canada's regulatory system. Likewise, American trucking companies are attempting to gain access to Canadian cities and routes but the process has been slow and cumbersome, since licences in Canada are issued by the provinces.

Ontario's Position:

American accusations of discrimination by Canada are unfounded: Ontario applies the same standards and tests to all applicants, regardless of domicile. The creation of a bilateral consultative body to resolve problems affecting either or both countries in the trucking sector should improve communication and diffuse any future disputes that might arise.

Developing an International Profile

The economic development of Ontario on the international scene and the resolution of international issues can best be pursued by establishing a stable and effective profile for the province abroad. This can be achieved by the following methods, which require careful management.

Ministerial Travel

There is no doubt that visits abroad by the Premier of Ontario and by government ministers present great opportunities for heightening the province's image. Official visits over the past two years by Premier William Davis and a number of his ministers to the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Western Europe have made a positive impact on the representatives of foreign governments and their academic and business communities. The range of Ontario's interests abroad is vividly illustrated by the long list of official visits by ministers. In many countries, particularly in the Third World, only minister-to minister contacts can achieve any real success. The province is now actively pursuing interests and opportunities in Asia, Australasia, the Middle East, and the Caribbean basin, as well as in traditional areas of contact such as the United States and Western Europe.

Representation Abroad

Recently, Ontario substantiated its recognition of the importance of an effective international profile by increasing the number of its "agencies general" abroad. Until 1982, only London, England, had an Ontario House. Under the direction of an agent general, who represents the interests of the Government of Ontario as a whole, delegation staff represent such areas as agriculture, cultural relations, selective placement and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario, as well as Industry and Trade and Tourism.

Ontario Houses were opened in Paris and Brussels in 1982 in response to two main considerations:

- general recognition that both cities held, for quite different reasons, an importance for the province and a variety of opportunities that could best be responded to by a general delegation;
- encouragement by the federal government, which agreed that Canada's own image and interests in Western Europe would benefit from a stronger Ontario presence.

In June 1983 an agent general was appointed to the Ontario office in New York, in recognition of the importance of that location and the fact that such offices help build Ontario's profile and reinforce its

image. Generally speaking, delegations achieve long-term results through consistent efforts over a continuous period.

Cultural Promotion

Some countries have effectively used the export of culture as a powerful foreign policy tool. By utilizing cultural events and activities to establish a national profile abroad, Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Japan -- to mention some prominent examples -- have accomplished much in support of their economic and commercial activities. Whereas Canada has only recently begun to consider this type of vehicle, the province of Quebec has had great success in exporting cultural activities, particularly to the francophone countries of Western Europe. Ontario, too, is now beginning to expand its cultural activities abroad.

At the present time, Canada has bilateral cultural agreements with five foreign countries: France, Belgium, Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany and Mexico. A general exchange agreement (G.E.A.) with the Soviet Union covers cultural relations. An arrangement exists with the Netherlands for cultural consultations every second year. Canada also carries out a more general and comprehensive series of exchanges with the United Kingdom.

Under these "umbrella" agreements, Ontario takes part in cultural exchanges with each of these countries. It also participates in annual or biennial discussions between Canada and the above-mentioned countries.

At present, negotiations are being carried out between the federal government and Italy and Venezuela with a view to signing cultural agreements. Negotiations for co-operation with Algeria in the cultural as well as other areas are also underway. Ontario has been a party to these discussions and is working with the federal government to finalize the terms of the agreements.

The promotion of Ontario's cultural achievements -- in the arts, the theatre, music and education -- is a fundamental part of the development of its profile abroad. International exposure enables Ontario artists and educators to expand their horizons and share their abilities, techniques and interests with others.

Although international cultural activity has no direct commercial impact, it can achieve, both economically and politically, long-term and lasting effects. By knowing something of the province's cultural heritage and potential, foreign peoples -- particularly those engaged in trade and commerce -- are more likely to pay greater interest to Ontario.

Participating in International Agreements

The treaty-making power of the Canadian government is no longer in dispute: the federal government has the sole power to enter into treaties and formal international agreements on behalf of Canada. Provinces, nevertheless, have two substantial roles to play in this field, and Ontario is vitally concerned with and active in both.

The primary role of provinces in this field is to participate with the federal government in entering into treaties or agreements. Under the Constitution Act, 1867 the provinces were given legislative authority over certain specific areas such as civil rights and education. This means that, in these two subject areas for example, while the federal government signs or frames international agreements, the provinces determine the content or substance of these agreements, and apply their own requirements through provincial legislation or regulations.

Education and civil rights are examples of areas where provinces have almost total control in international agreements. But in areas where responsibility is divided between the federal and provincial governments -- for example, the environment, transportation and natural resources -- the provinces must play a part in ensuring that any treaty or international agreement entered into by Canada adequately reflects their interests.

A current example, of importance to Ontario, is the Memorandum of Intent between Canada and the United States on the regulation of the long-range transportation of air pollutants -- the central document in the acid rain issue. The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement is another example. Ontario has played, and continues to play, an important part in bilateral discussions and agreements on these issues.

A second, and no less important, aspect of provincial activity in international agreements concerns those accords or agreements (with foreign jurisdictions) which the provinces can arrange themselves, through and with the assistance of External Affairs. These accords can be between Ontario and a national entity: for example, the Workers Compensation Board agreements with Italy and Greece. Or they can be between a province and a similar unit of another federal system such as an American state: for example, a motor vehicle licence reciprocity agreement with New York State.

Apart from a general interest in the substance and process of international agreements, it is in Ontario's interest to abide by the terms of bilateral or multilateral accords such as the GATT agreement, designed to promote and regulate freer international trade relations.

It is equally important for Ontario, which relies to such a large extent on international trade, to encourage its trading partners to adhere to their GATT commitments.

By living up to multilateral agreements and by expecting and encouraging other nations to do likewise, Ontario is committed to participating fully in international agreements.

Exporting Expertise

As one of the world's most developed and technologically advanced areas, Ontario is in the fortunate position of being able to sell its expertise and services to other nations, and it is very much in the provincial interest to do so. Ontario provides educational training and agricultural and scientific knowledge to lesser developed countries by sending trained personnel to provide them with needed skills.

Several ministries are, by their very nature, international; that is, they are concerned with areas and responsibilities that know no political boundaries. The Ontario government ministries responsible for providing such services exchange information and personnel, share expertise and communicate with foreign national and international institutions having the same interests on a regular basis.

International Aid and Assistance

Since the Ontario government maintains that international aid programs are the responsibility of the federal government, it does not have any ministry or agency with responsibilities similar to those of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Ontario does, however, provide two specific forms of international assistance. The first is a result of the longstanding and close relationship between Ontario and the Caribbean nations of the Commonwealth -- an offshoot of Canada's interests in the Caribbean. Assistance in the form of grants or equipment is provided in a small but consistent way to some Caribbean Islands.

On a broader scale, Ontario provides international disaster relief funding. This has been made available in the recent past to several nations following natural disasters, such as hurricanes or earthquakes, or following significant social upheavals. This relief is normally co-ordinated with similar or parallel programs at the federal level, and grants are usually made to the Canadian Red Cross Society in response to requests. This funding, which is, by definition, ad hoc and not part of an established program, is humanitarian in nature and is in recognition of the province's interest in contributing to a real need. In comparison to federal grants, provincial grants are quite small -- a reflection of the fact that

more than 40 per cent of federal revenues are raised in this province. A grant from Ontario is therefore an additional sum to what has usually already been contributed by Ontario taxpayers through the federal government.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Commercial Activities

Ontario's efforts abroad have been and continue to be focussed on the search for markets and investment. This is the primary responsibility of the province's Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT), which has become increasingly active in this area.

The Ministry supports the following international operations, which function simultaneously.

International Offices

Ontario civil servants, supported by locally employed commercial counsellors and support staff, are located in five American cities (New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Atlanta and Dallas), four European (London, Paris, Brussels and Frankfurt) and two Asian (Tokyo and Hong Kong). In addition, three "satellite" offices are now being opened in the United States: Boston and Baltimore (reporting to New York) and San Francisco (reporting to Los Angeles).

Consideration is also being given to organizing subsidiary representation in other American centres. Supplemental to and more focussed than Canadian consulates, the offices are charged with representing and facilitating trade and investment opportunities for the province.

Trade Development Missions

Organized and led by MIT staff, groups of Ontario businessmen are taken to foreign countries and briefed on local business conditions, needs, interests and opportunities. It is hoped that such contacts will facilitate Ontario export sales. Trade missions travel to any part of the world where there are reasonable sales opportunities: Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Australasia and Latin America.

Ontario International Corporation

The corporation is active in promoting and facilitating capital projects overseas for both the public and private sectors. Corporation staff in Ontario provide advice in this area and frequently participate in missions, mainly to lesser developed nations, to locate sites and develop contacts.

Urban Transportation Development Corporation (UTDC)

Having developed both a light rail vehicle (LRV) and a rapid transit vehicle (LRT) for cities, the corporation has been marketing both systems internationally. UTDC has been particularly active in the United States, where a number of bids have been made. One of its projects is now under construction in Detroit; another project in which the corporation is actively involved is the United Kingdom's Docklands project. The UTDC has also recently entered into an agreement to be involved in the planning of an urban transportation system for the City of Shanghai.

Educational, Cultural and Scientific Activities

The range of Ontario's international activities in these areas is considerable. A variety of programs and activities exist in the educational field alone: teacher and student exchanges are underway with several European countries; Ministry of Education personnel are loaned to other jurisdictions or organizations: to U.N. agencies such as UNESCO, The World Health Organization (WHO), The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) or The International Labour Organization (ILO).

Ontario educators participate regularly in seminars in various European countries. The Ontario Ministry of Education also promotes annual summer seminars on Canadian studies, attended by educators from all over Europe. These have been very successful in promoting Ontario educational structures abroad. The placement of Ontario teachers -- both anglophone and francophone -- in Third World countries has increased over the past few years. Such exchanges not only provide employment for the province's teachers but also enable them to promote Ontario's image in other countries.

The following specialized agencies of the Ontario government also play a prominent role abroad.

Ontario Education Services Corporation (O.E.S.C.)

This corporation provides Ontario educational expertise to other parts of the world. Its main focus is the lesser developed nations; it has been active primarily in Asia and the Middle East. Having achieved success with projects in Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, the corporation is now attempting to extend its operations to other areas such as Morocco and Algeria.

Ontario Educational Communications Authority
(O.E.C.A.)

The O.E.C.A.'s activities abroad consist of buying and selling television programs. To this end, the communications authority has opened an office in Dallas for the sale of programming to the southern U.S. and to Latin America.

Canadian Studies Programs

Various universities in Britain and the United States have instituted Canadian Studies programs for which the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs provides an active contact. Government documents, speeches, and position papers are sent to Canadian Studies centres or libraries of host universities. Research projects on Ontario-U.S. relations are commissioned from time to time. Ontario government ministers and officials also participate in lectures and seminars. And students and faculty from many U.S. institutions visit Queen's Park

regularly for briefings and interviews, as do groups from government training establishments in France, the U.S. and African countries.

Ontario's agent general in London acts as a contact for Canadian studies programs of British universities. Agents general in France and Belgium have also begun to make frequent appearances at French and Belgian universities in support of Ontario faculty or students in these countries. Intergovernmental Affairs gives financial support to the main Canadian university student residence in Paris, La Maison des étudiants canadiens to ensure its survival as a facility used by many Ontario students, and as a gesture of support for and interest in the francophone world's most reputable university, La Sorbonne.

Agricultural Development and Research

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, through its own research facilities and those of the Ontario Agricultural College and the Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph, has a long record of providing assistance through teaching, training, administration and research. Research done here in Ontario in such areas as seed development, agricultural techniques, crop yield improvement, animal husbandry and breeding techniques has benefitted other countries and earned Ontario worldwide recognition. In addition, teachers

and scientists have been posted overseas to help lesser developed nations improve their agriculture capacity and develop their own agricultural veterinary specialists. While many of these projects have been sponsored or organized by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) or the International Research and Development Council (I.R.D.C.), it has only been through the pool of expertise available under Ontario government-supported teaching and research programs that Canada has been able to provide such leadership and assistance.

Social Services

Among the specialized international social services and programs that should be mentioned are the reporting activities under international human rights conventions and the agreements with foreign states, subscribed to by Ontario's Workers' Compensation Board.

Human Rights

With the agreement of the provinces, the Canadian government has undertaken commitments to several international human rights conventions of the United Nations, including the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. By these undertakings, Canada, and thereby each province, is

committed to providing the standards of life and guarantees of rights enunciated in the conventions to which our country has subscribed. From time to time, the U.N. secretariat documents the progress of all subscribing countries towards meeting the standards set out in the conventions by requiring each country to file a comprehensive report on its activities in this area. In Canada, with 10 provinces being responsible for civil rights legislation, the process requires a great deal of co-ordination.

Ontario's Ministry of the Attorney General plays a leading role in co-ordinating the province's reports, which are transmitted to the federal Department of External Affairs through the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs. Given the number of conventions, their size and the detail of reporting required, this is a lengthy process. For example, a report on the provincial legislation in place pertaining to just three articles of the economic, social and cultural rights convention took a full year to compile because of the number of ministries involved.

Workers' Compensation Board Agreements

Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) agreements with corresponding institutions in foreign countries are a comparatively recent innovation, resulting from specific problems related to Ontario's immigrant workers, who

maintain close ties with their countries of origin. Under umbrella agreements signed between the Canadian government and the governments of Italy, Portugal and Greece, memoranda of understanding were signed between the WCB and similar institutions in these countries. These memoranda deal with various aspects of labour relations, such as the treatment of injured workers, payment of benefits or pensions.

Liaison, Co-ordination and Hospitality

Intergovernmental Affairs

The primary purpose of the ministry's International Relations Branch is to serve as the province's main liaison with the federal Department of External Affairs while promoting provincial interests. A special division of External Affairs -- Federal-Provincial Co-ordination -- is charged with providing information and assistance to the provinces.

The International Relations Branch works closely with the division and keeps the Government of Ontario and its ministries informed about Canadian foreign policy and international activity. Likewise, the department keeps abreast of Ontario's international activities and interests. The Federal-Provincial Co-ordination Division facilitates access by the International Relations Branch to all parts of the Department of External Affairs, thereby providing it with a complete government-wide view of Canadian foreign relations.

Resource Ministries

The Ministry of Industry and Trade has its own substantial network of communications with the Ministry of State for International Trade, recently added to External Affairs. This ministry extends Ontario's trade and commercial interests to all parts of the world.

Other internationally focussed ministries in Ontario deal with particular units of the Department of External Affairs with regard to their own special interests. For example, the Ministry of Natural Resources has been involved with the department's Bureau of United States Affairs on several transborder problems and resource-related issues -- softwood lumber being an important current example. Another example was Natural Resources' concern with the Law of the Sea negotiations and the possible impact of a Law of the Sea Treaty on Ontario's mining interests.

Other Ontario government ministries that deal with the bureau on transborder issues are the ministries of the Environment, Energy and Transportation and Communications.

Education and Culture

The ministries of Citizenship and Culture, Education and Colleges and Universities deal with External Affairs as well, primarily through the Bureau of International Cultural Relations, but also through units responsible for political affairs, international institutions such as UNESCO and francophone affairs. With reference to the latter, Intergovernmental Affairs, through the Office of the Government Co-ordinator of French-Language Services, maintains contact with francophone technical and cultural institutions throughout the world, interested in co-operative ventures.

Visits to Ontario

The number of important international visitors to Ontario -- parliamentary delegations, heads of state, government leaders, foreign journalists, ministers, officials and business groups -- has been increasing steadily over the past few years. The Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs' Office of Protocol is responsible for making arrangements for such visits. During the past year, Ontario welcomed, among others, the presidents of Egypt, Greece and Guinea and the prime ministers of France, Greece and Portugal. The province has also received several Royal visits.

The Office of Protocol is also charged with the management of government hospitality and organizes all functions hosted by Ontario. The International Relations Branch provides policy briefing material for the visits organized by Protocol and others.

With the growth of Ontario's international profile, Toronto's consular corps has increased from 16 to 65 in the past 15 to 20 years. Many of these consular representatives take a great deal of interest in Ontario government activities such as the fostering of increased trade, exchanges, tourism and visits. A close relationship with the consular corps is therefore of great interest and benefit to the province.

International Relations Branch

One of the primary functions of the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs' International Relations Branch is to advise the Government of Ontario on its international intergovernmental relations.

The branch provides the following services to the Minister and government:

- advice on Canadian foreign policy;
- advice on the implications for the province of events outside Canada;

- advice on the government's corporate interests in provincial international activity.

To fulfil its functions effectively, the branch is engaged in a number of activities:

- monitoring internal intergovernmental issues;
- supporting Ontario's interests outside Canada and proposing initiatives to further Ontario's interests in other countries;
- providing liaison with the Department of External Affairs;
- co-ordinating the interests of various ministries, when appropriate;
- providing briefing material for ministers and other provincial government representatives travelling abroad;
- providing briefing material on important visitors to Queen's Park.

In addition to these functions the branch oversees the direction and management of Ontario's offices in Paris and Brussels.

Fortunately, Canadian foreign policy encourages a very large degree of promotional activity abroad, and the Canadian government places few restrictions on Canadians undertaking international travel or business. However, there are some restrictions or limitations that apply to Canada's governments and their representatives in

the case of areas in which Canada has no diplomatic relations or in the case of regions in which Canadian government ministers and senior officials are not allowed to travel on business such as Taiwan, South Africa, the West Bank or East Jerusalem. In such instances, where relations with other countries are delicate or complex, careful planning and preparation of any visits is essential. This is an area in which the International Relations Branch can provide useful advice and assistance.

CONCLUSION

As this document demonstrates, the Government of Ontario is involved in a broad range of international activities which will undoubtedly continue to grow in number and complexity over the coming years.

Similarly, the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs' International Relations Branch is active in many different ways in providing services and monitoring intergovernmental activity.

The challenge for the future is for the Ontario government to keep abreast of international developments and to ensure that it has the necessary expertise to maintain its leadership role among Canada's provinces on the international scene.

